MINUTES
CITY OF COCOA
COCOA CRA
SPECIAL MEETING
OCTOBER 23, 2019

The Special Meeting of the Cocoa Community Redevelopment Agency was held on October 23, 2019 at City Hall, 65 Stone Street, Cocoa, FL, as publically noted.

I. Call to Order

Chairperson Williams called the meeting to order at 5:10 pm

ROLL CALL:

Jake Williams, Jr.	Chair Person
Brenda Warner	Vice Chairperson
Don Boisvert	Agency Member
Janne Etz	Agency Member
Alex Goins	Agency Member
Lorraine Koss	Agency Member (Via Phone Conference)
Edward Lanni	Agency Member
Anthony Garganese	City Attorney
Courtney Jackson	Recording Secretary

PRESENT:

Jake Williams, Jr.	Chair Person
Brenda Warner	Vice Chairperson
Don Boisvert	Agency Member
Janne Etz	Agency Member
Alex Goins	Agency Member
Lorraine Koss	Agency Member (Via Phone Conference)
Edward Lanni	Agency Member
Anthony Garganese	City Attorney
Courtney Jackson	Recording Secretary

ABESENT:

STAFF PRESENT:
Nancy Bunt, Community Services Director (arrived at 5:50pm), **Matt Fuhrer**, Assistant City Manager, **Darryl Niles**, RDA Manager, **Charlene Neuterman**, Community Services Deputy Director.

Agency Member Goins provided the invocation and **Agency Member Boisvert** led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

II. **Approval Of Agenda And Minutes:**

1. AGENDA: Meeting of October 23, 2019

* **MOTION by Agency Member Lanni; SECONDED by Agency Member Boisvert to approve the Agenda for the October 23, 2019 Special Meeting.**

AYES: Williams, Warner, Boisvert, Etz, Goins, Koss, Lanni

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (7-0)

2. MINUTES: Regular Meeting of September 11, 2019

* **MOTION by Agency Member Lanni; SECONDED by Agency Member Warner to approve the Minutes as written for the September 11, 2019 Regular Meeting.**

AYES: Williams, Warner, Boisvert, Etz, Goins, Koss, Lanni

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (7-0)

III. **Delegations**

None.

IV. **Action Items**

1. **Approve Amendment #2 to Task Order 2019-11 (Change Order #1 to Purchase Order 74623) with our Infrastructure Solution Services (ISS), of Melbourne, FL, for services related to the evaluation of four additional sites for the Cocoa Civic Center in the amount of $8,900. Approve a Budget Transfer in the amount of $8,900 from Cocoa CRA Contingency (110-3230-559-39-00) to Cocoa CRA Professional Services (110-3230-559-31-00) to complete the remaining tasks associated with the project CD 18LW.**

Mr. Niles presented the Action Item to the Board and provided background on the item as well as Staff's recommendation.

Chair Williams addressed the rumors circulating around the agenda and felt that this meeting was called due to a miscommunication between Staff and the Board. He expressed that the studies of alternative sites should have been done prior to this point.

Agency Member Koss noted the resiliency of the Lee Wenner site is an issue. She expressed that the City can still make a Civic Center beautiful and iconic at other sites. She stated that they can only add a recreational amenities on the waterfront. She hopes that Cocoa can build resiliency into the Lee Wenner Park site and that the known vulnerability of the site will not affect any FEMA funding.

Aleck Greenwood (640 Brevard Ave) cautioned the CRA Board to not rush into any decisions without first doing the proper research and inquired if there was any chance Cocoa Village Commercial Business Owners could have a say regarding the Civic Center.

Ed Green (104 Riverside Dr.) shared that the Lee Wenner Park is part of the Master Plan and to go against it would mean undermining the will of the people. He explained that resiliency can be addressed through geo-tech and structure aspects of the project and shared his feedback regarding the pros and cons for alternative sites, boat parking for the Lee Wenner Park site, and the parking situation overall.

Emma Kirkpatrick (316 Brevard Ave.) spoke regarding Mr. Green's stance on the parking issues the Village currently faces and expressed that having the Civic Center at Lee Wenner Park would relieve the parking issues in the Village.

Alan Chapman (434 Delannoy) expressed that Lee Wenner Park is the City's best option for the Civic Center as Cocoa already owns it, the shoreline hardening has already been done and that placing the Civic Center at Lee Wenner Park would be a great improvement to replace an aging building with a newer and better structure that is resilient.

Mike Meruis (93 Delannoy) shared an example of his hometown in Milwaukee having a failing experience with their new Civic Center due to lack of planning and coordination. He emphasized that there are several areas that need more research and discussed his stance on researching better parking options not just for the Civic Center, but for Cocoa Village overall.

Nancy Elliot (3406 Indian River Dr.) shared that enthusiasm and momentum are key to moving forward. She felt that any change to the site would result in the City moving backwards and shared that the Historic Cocoa Village Main Street Association is in favor of the Civic Center being in Lee Wenner Park.

Linda Dolphin (2110 N. Indian River Dr) expressed that she supported the City looking at alternative sites[1] and studies before deciding on one, however she is in favor of the Lee Wenner Park site.

Dennis Childs (2100 N. Indian River Dr.) briefly shared his professional background as it pertains to Civic Centers. He explained if the board were to go through with the alternative site plan studies, he requested that a verbal presentation be presented by those performing the studies who would share, at a minimum, why the additional studies should be done by Infrastructure Solution Services (ISS). He noted the board

[1] Anthony Garganese left the room at 5:32

should to take a hard look at alternative sites and the issues that they pose and emphasized the importance for preliminary investigations.

Candace Rogers (93 Delannoy Dr.) discussed that the Lee Wenner Park site was in consideration[2] for a long time and how New Smyrna Beach has a similar Civic Center. She suggested mitigating the parking problem, and feels that the city should go along with what the parking study told them to do before deciding if implementing a parking garage attached to the civic center is a good idea. Lastly, she pointed out that the $8,900 to look at alternative sites is going to the same people who already said the Lee Wenner Park is a great spot for the Civic Center.

Richard Ames (104 River Side Drive) *Candace Rodgers spoke on his behalf* she read from a prepared excerpt that provided background for Lee Wenner Park and explained that because the citizens are paying to keep it maintained, this should be a park for the City and not a boat ramp parking lot. The walkway along SR520 should be a road that leads to a focal-point waterfront, upscale Civic Center. He stated that Lee Wenner Park used to be a run-down boat trailer park. It was expressed that by having the Civic Center there, it would solve this and other issues. The city should look towards paying for parking studies with the new hotel and not towards looking for other locations for a less desirable Civic Center locations.

Jennifer Riggs (1629 N. Indian River Dr.) thinks that the focal point should be the businesses that are in the Village and the waterfront should be developed to enhance that focal point that drives people to those businesses. She expressed her perception of the working groups and felt the process was incomplete and lacked rigor in terms of collecting data and reflecting data back. Discussed the best and highest use for Lee Wenner Park is in recreation and boating. She asked for the board to avoid overconcentration on development. Lastly, she explained her takeaways from attending a Flood Plain Managers meeting regarding capital and real estate markets responding to upcoming climate change.

Discussion between **Agency Member Goins** and **Ms. Riggs** regarding what "recreation" meant to her as it pertains to the water and she explained the activities she would like to see implemented. Ms. Riggs stated that these should include kayak rental, lagoon education, restrooms and an exercise park to encourage health and wellness.

Chair Williams Jr. discussed the negative activity that surrounded Lee Wenner Park and felt it was due to the bridge over the waterway being shut down and expressed they tried to get funding to re-open it for the public to utilize the bridge.

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[2] Anthony Garganese re-entered the room at 5:37pm)

Pam Shaia (308 Brevard Ave.) expressed her dissent for the "emergency meeting" and shared the Webster Dictionary's definition of "emergency". Based on the definition, she did not feel it was an emergency. She noted that it is a good thing to have a parking dilemma because that means business is good and then she listed what she felt were real emergencies that the $8,900 would be better spent on:[3]

- Lack of lighting in the village
- The unsanitary conditions of the public restrooms in the Village, especially the one on Oleander
- Village appearance from SR 520 and Florida Avenue appearing worn down.

She further expressed her frustration of how other Brevard County cities' appearances seem to be moving "ahead" of Cocoa and felt the money should go towards renovating Cocoa.

Chair Williams rebutted Ms. Shaia's claim by explaining the meeting was never addressed or advertised as an "emergency", rather it is a "special meeting". He pointed out that no members on board asked for the meeting.

Ms. Shaia demanded to know who requested the meeting to be held and expressed her frustrations for having to close her two businesses to attend tonight's meeting.

Chair Williams Jr., explained it was staff that called the meeting and that he was not notified of the contents of the meeting until the Saturday prior to the meeting.

Matt Fuhrer (Assistant City Manager) discussed the background regarding how the site was selected to implement a Civic Center along the water front at Lee Wenner Park. He stated that the Civic Center was planned as part of the Waterfront Study and that's why no other sites were chosen.

Ms. Shaia expressed the city should spend $8,900 on more important things than additional site studies.

* **MOTION MADE BY AGENCY MEMBER GOINS; SECONDED BY AGENCY MEMBER WARNER TO EXTEND THE MEETING TILL 6:15PM.**

AYES: Williams, Warner, Boisvert, Etz, Goins, Koss, Lanni

MOTION PASSES (7-0)

Robin Green (25 Stone St.) noted that having the Civic Center at Lee Wenner Park would relieve parking in the village and moving it elsewhere would only add to the parking

[3] Nancy Bunt entered the room at 5:50pm)

problem. She also suggested implementing side-by-side parking along Brevard Ave instead of parallel.

Marilyn Green (104 Riverside Dr.) shared the city's vision of the Civic Center at Lee Wenner Park. She noted that it is important that citizens know the plan was not developed in a funnel, and that the Civic Center at Lee Wenner Park would maximize the area, and that location would be the best location for big events and would generate a lot of money that could be put back into the city and maybe into a multi-tier parking lot at Oleander. She expressed that the problem with Cocoa is that plans are always being second-guessed and that is why plans are not moving forward. She shared her support of the $8,900 going towards other uses in the city such as wireless security cameras, better maintained landscaping, better lighting, and implementing a police satellite office in the village. Lastly, she expressed that the ratings for the Lee Wenner Park site would be outstanding and urged the board to not investigate other sites.

Chair Williams Jr. expressed that he understands everyone's frustrations and concerns for the parking issue and shares their frustrations for plans not moving forward.

Agency Member Etz pointed out that the additional sites are not feasible and she is against moving forward with paying for additional site studies.

Agency Member Lanni explained that parking has been an issue for the last 30 years and feels there is no reason not to implement a multilevel parking lot. He further expressed his disagreements regarding the Lee Wenner Park site as he feels it is not an appropriate location for a Civic Center. He stated that we are a waterfront community and Lee Wenner Park is a place for boaters and enjoying the water.

Discussion between **Vice Chair Warner** and **Mr. Fuhrer** regarding elaborating on the insurance issue brought up by Councilmember Koss at the beginning of the meeting, including whether insurance issues could be addressed through the design of the Civic Center, and about possible complications regarding FEMA reimbursement since the area is considered vulnerable.

Vice Chair Warner shared her past experience with working with 846 brides and how each of them always took pictures by the water and expressed that having a waterfront Civic Center is an important aspect for drawing in events of a significant nature such as weddings, anniversary parties and rehearsal dinners. While she, personally, does not want a new civic center as she has raised concerns of the citizens not being able to afford the fees, she acknowledges the people's will and suggested moving forward with the site plan being at Lee Wenner Park.

* **MOTION MADE BY AGENCY MEMBER GOINS; SECONDED BY AGENCY MEMBER WARNER TO EXTEND THE MEETING UNTIL 6:30PM.**

AYES: Williams, Warner, Boisvert, Etz, Goins, Koss, Lanni

* **MOTION PASSES UNIAMIOUSLY (7-0)**

Agency Member Goins stated that he is not interested in spending more money on studying other sites. He suggested that resiliency be part of the design, and feels that the Lee Wenner Park site can be used for the facility and recreation simultaneously.
Agency Member Koss shared that she does not want to push for the $8,900 study and responded to the claims of the city ignoring "the process". She expressed that the referendum of the Lee Wenner Park site was interesting and hopes the site can provide recreation opportunities. Lastly, she hopes the studies they are waiting on come back and commented that the vulnerability studies are being ignored.

Chair Williams Jr. shared the feasibility study should be completed shortly.

Agency Member Boisvert agrees that Cocoa Village has a lighting problem and that there are other more important things to spend the $8,900 on. He lastly expressed he is excited about the Civic Center being at Lee Wenner Park.

Chair Williams Jr. discussed that he has had multiple conversations regarding mitigating the parking issue. He shared he has also spoken to providers from Brevard County at the Cocoa Beach County Club regarding affordable housing and homelessness. He feels the vagrancy problem started to arise after the restrooms and gazebos were locked and closed off in Lee Wenner Park/downtown and they are currently faced with how to address the vagrancy issue. He announced current work on the lighting issue with LED string lights on the trees in the Village and shared other upcoming projects that are moving forward.

* **Motion by Vice Chair Warner; SECONDED by Agency Member Etz to Take No Action for Action Item IV.**

AYES: Williams, Warner, Boisvert, Etz, Goins

OPPOSED: Lanni

MOTION PASSES (5-1)

COUNCILMEMBER KOSS REFRAINED FROM VOTING ON ACTION ITEM IV.

Vice Chair Warner requested that the Board have copies of the 2007 and 2017 parking studies for review and to discuss in the future the possibility of implementing items that are included in them, specifically the ones that are of no cost.

V. Attorney's Report

None.

VI. Updates and Staff Reports

1. Project Reports

Mr. Niles shared that the project update report is attached in their agenda for review.

2. Budget Reports

Mr. Niles shared that the budget update report is attached in their agenda for review.

VII. Next Meeting Date

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Cocoa Redevelopment Agency will be on Wednesday, November 13, 2019 at 5pm at the Cocoa City Hall, 65 Stone Street, Cocoa, Florida, unless a business need arises earlier.

VIII. Adjournment

* **MOTION made by Agency Member Boisvert; SECONDED by Agency Member Lanni to adjourn the Special Meeting of October 23, 2019.**

AYES: Williams, Warner, Boisvert, Etz, Goins, Koss, Lanni

MOTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY (7-0)

MEETING WAS ADJOURNED at 7:25pm

Jake Williams, Jr., Chairperson

Respectfully Submitted by:

Courtney Jackson

Courtney Jackson, Recording Secretary